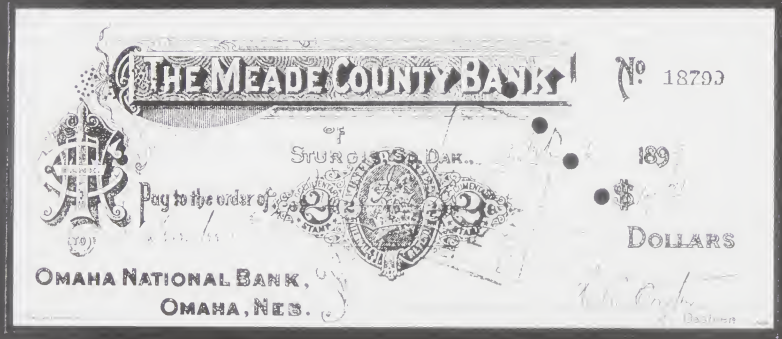
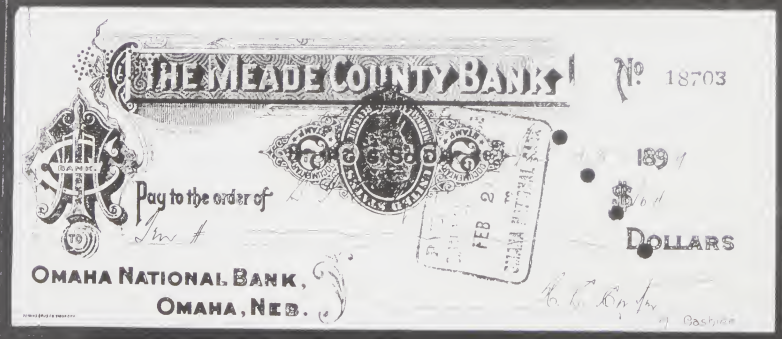
THE CHECK COLLECTOR

July-September 1996 The Journal of Number 39
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CHECK COLLECTORS, INC.





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To our members:

Write something for *The Check Collector*! We need articles about checks, check related subjects, and fiscal documents See the list of 32 areas of collecting interests on the inside back of the mailing cover for ideas.

We retype all material. Illustrations require an original or a good, clear, black and white copy at **80%** of the size of the original Original checks sent in are copied and returned carefully and promptly Finished check photos are always welcome Any questions, ask the Editor!

To our advertisers:

Deadline for advertising copy to run in the October-December issue of *The Check Collector* is November 10.

The Check Collector is an effective means of reaching the check collecting hobby, and our membership of collectors and dealers of checks and related financial documents. It contains feature articles about checks and check collecting and news about the hobby.

Advertising orders must be paid in advance and shall be restricted to checks and related fiscal documents, publications, accessories, and supplies. The ASCC accepts advertising in good faith, reserving the right to edit copy. Copy for ads must be camera-ready or the Editor will set it as best he can.

ASCC assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising. However, it will reprint that portion of an advertisement in which a typographical error appeared upon prompt notification of such error.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The summer has been busy, with short trips and long projects. The short trips have offered the chance for stops at some out of the way places - which, for my husband and I, mean "antique shops". This has offered an opportunity to add to my reference library. I hope you have all had similar success with your summer endeavors.

In my last message, I spoke about my wish for strong regional organizations. But that is just the beginning.

I am concerned about maintaining (and expanding) the size of our membership. To that end, Coleman Leifer and I have prepared a member survey which will be sent to all members with their next membership renewal information. We ask your cooperation in returning this to us to provide us with your comments and suggestions on what you would like your organization to be, what membership services you might find helpful, our ASCC publication, and a written invitation in several areas to get more involved in ASCC if you wish (and we certainly hope you wish to). We continue to gain new members, yet our numbers remain constant, so we are losing as many as we gain. The information gleaned from this survey will help us assess where we need to focus our attention and hopefully meet the needs of all of our members.

In addition, Coleman and I have reviewed the current ASCC bylaws and made some suggestions for streamlining them. The bylaw revisions are in the hands of the board of directors now, and based on their approval, will be printed for you in the next publication of *The Check Collector*.

Merritte

Advertising rates are as follows:
One quarter page $25.00/issue
Business card size $15.00/issue
$10 discount for four issues paid at once.

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Founded ASCC in 1969

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CHECK COLLECTORS, INC.

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Once in a Blue Moon

By Bob Hohertz

Once in a blue moon a dealer or a collector is able to purchase an unsorted group of checks, drafts, and related documents. One of our dealer members, Russ Hornbacher of Spearfish, South Dakota, was fortunate to be able to do this a bit earlier this year. A friend had purchased an old bank building in Sturgis, South Dakota, and offered Russ the contents.

Russ found several thousand checks, drafts, and certificates of deposit, dating from the territorial period through the early part of this century. There was a variety of different kinds, ranging in number from one or two to more than a thousand.

The territorial items included drafts and certificates of deposit from Stebbins, Fox and Company, a well-respected banking house which put others in the area out of business. (**Figures 1** and **2**.) Checks include those from the Lawrence County Bank, including some altered from the First National Bank of Deadwood. (**Figures 3** and **4**)

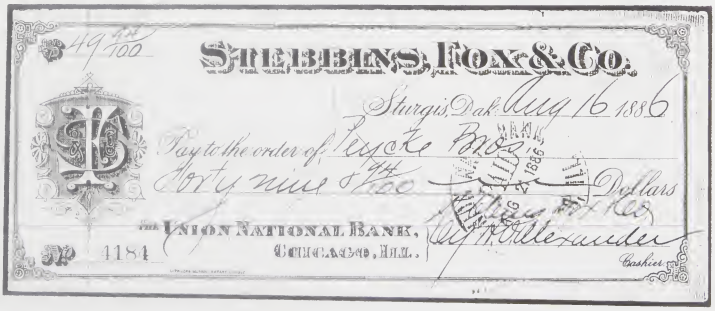


Figure 1 A draft from Stebbins, Fox and Company, lithographed by John Morris Company, Chicago.

Items with adhesive revenues paying the Spanish American War revenue tax include certificates of deposit and checks on the Meade County Bank and checks on the First National Bank of Sturgis. (**Figures 5** through **7**.)

There were also a variety of checks, drafts, and certificates of deposit bearing imprinted revenue stamps, all associated with the Meade County Bank. There were at least three varieties of checks. (**Figures 8** and **9**.) There were also some attractive certificates of deposit. (**Figure 10**.)

Finally, there were drafts, with the secondary institution being either the Omaha National bank or the Banker's National Bank of Chicago. (**Figures 11 and 12**, on the cover.)

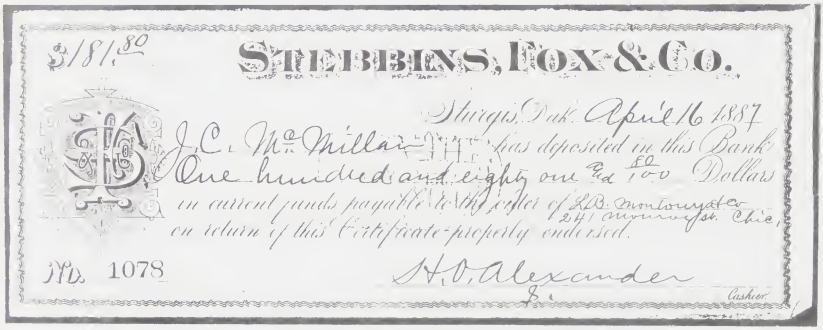

STEBBINS, FOX & CO.
Sturgis Dak April 16 1887
J.C. McMillan has deposited in this Bank
One hundred and eighty one 80/100 Dollars
on current funds payable to the order of R.B. Montgomery & Co
on return of this Certificate properly endorsed.
No. 1078
H.O. Alexander
Cashier

Figure 2. A Stebbins, Fox and Company certificate of deposit from the territorial period.

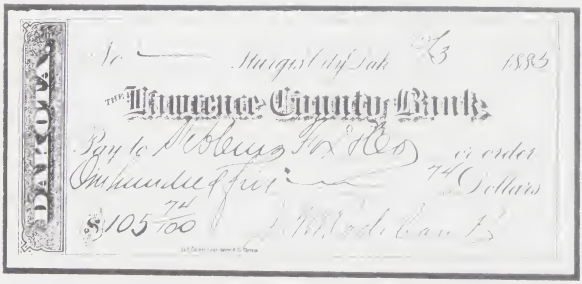


Figure 3. A Lawrence County Bank Check lithographed by Culver, Page, Hoyne & Co., Chicago.

Russ was looking through the drafts when he noticed that some of the imprinted revenues were placed high enough that they ran into the bank heading and the name of the town. He took a closer look, and discovered that these imprints were inverted! Once in a blue moon.....

Inverted Type X checks or drafts are rare. They are known from six sources now, including this one. Bill Castenholz has included an article "Some Rare X Types" in the revised edition of *Field Guide to Revenue Stamped Paper, Part 1 - The Western States*, which is being released about the time this magazine reaches you. The entire article is well worth reading.

In the article, Bill comments, "There can be little doubt that more discoveries will occur." In a letter to the Editor he said, "It seemed a safe statement to make at the time. I did not expect another discovery to be made even before the article's appearance! Ah, such is the excitement of this facet of philately."

"Contained in 'Some Rare X Types' is a discussion of the inverts of which there are five (now six) users. Of the previously known pieces there are two each extant from the Peoples National Bank of Rock Island, Illinois, and from the Bank of Oroville, California. Four were apparently found from the Atlantic City National Bank in New Jersey and one each from the Amsterdam City National Bank and the First National Bank of Oxford, both in New York State."

There were twenty-five inverted Type X checks in the Sturgis find. Russ has kept one of these, and the remaining 24, along with the other revenue imprinted checks and drafts, have been obtained by Doug McDonald, of Gypsyfoot Enterprises, Inc. (See his advertisement on page 28 of this journal.) This does not include any of the Harry Bunting, Big Stone Livery Stable checks (**Figure 9**), as Russ had no more of these beyond the one he decided to keep.

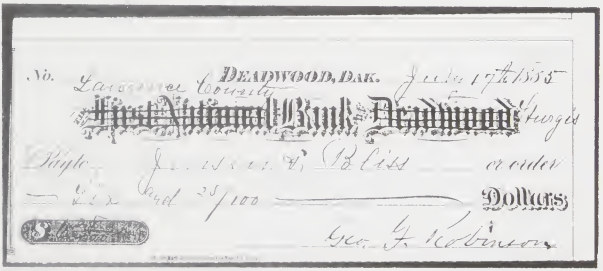


Figure 4. A Deadwood check, altered for use in Sturgis. It was lithographed by John Marts, successor to Culver, Page Hoyne & Co., Chicago.

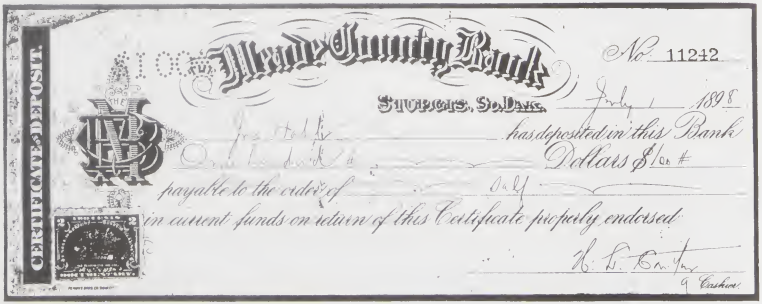


Figure 5. A certificate of deposit of the Meade City Bank used on the first day of the Spanish American War revenue tax, July 1, 1898. It was lithographed by Perkins Bros. Co., Sioux City.

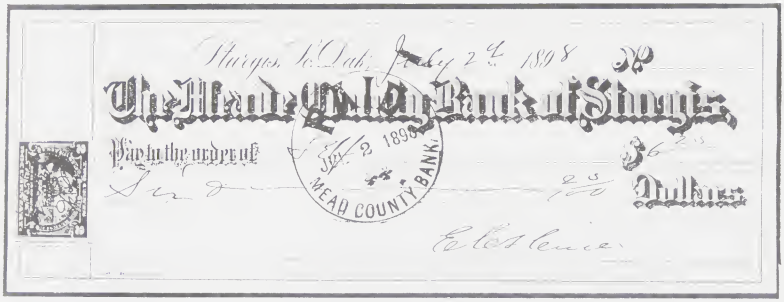


Figure 6. A check of the Meade County Bank of Sturgis issued on the second day of the Spanish American War check tax.

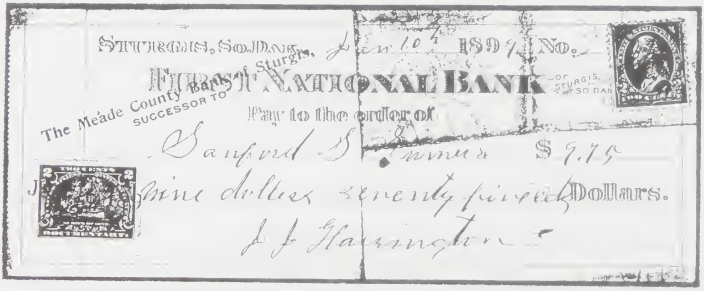


Figure 7. An altered check. The maker tried to pay the two cent check tax with a postage stamp, but apparently the Meade County Bank affixed a proper revenue stamp.

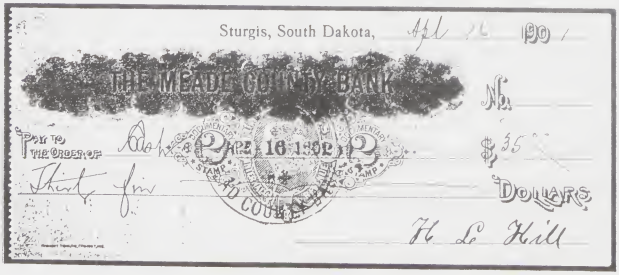


Figure 8. A Meade County Bank check bearing a Type X imprinted revenue. The check was printed by the Fremont Tribune.

Russ will be selling the territorial items and the statehood pieces with adhesive revenues and from a slightly later period.

Doug will keep one of the inverts and offer the remaining twenty-three (and other revenue stamped paper items from the find) for sale about the time this magazine is in your hands. He will keep photocopy records so Bill Castenholz can study the entire lot and, we hope, report his findings in a later issue of The Check Collector.

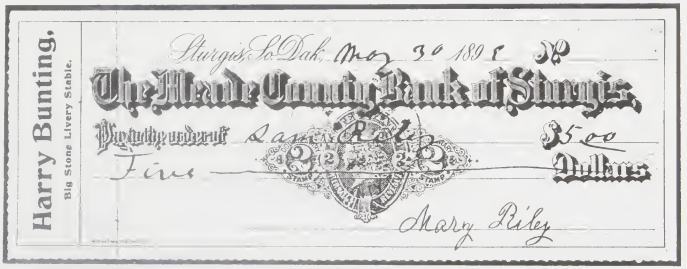


Figure 9. A check of the Big Stone Livery Stable, printed by Perkins Bros Co., Sioux City.

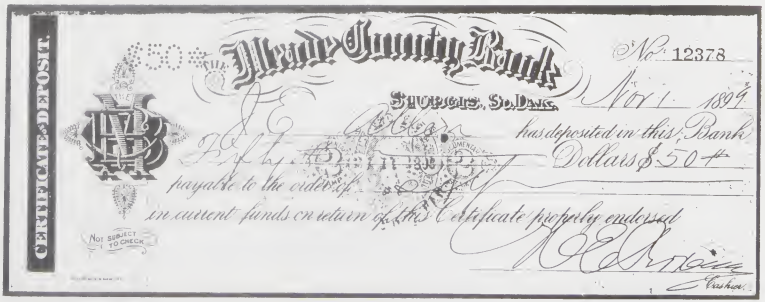


Figure 10. A certificate of deposit of the Meade County Bank bearing a Type X imprinted revenue. This was also printed by Perkins Bros. of Sioux City.

Exciting finds in territorial checks, stamped checks, and revenue stamped paper are still being made. And you read about it in *The Check Collector*! Being a quarterly magazine, it's once in a blue moon we can be the first to bring you news like this!

Intaglio Printed Checks by the American Bank Note Company

by Robin M. Ellis

Some few years ago the American Bank Note Company was mulling the idea of returning to the 'personal check' printing business, using intaglio methods as opposed to the normal offset method. I was one of the people ABNC personnel approached to sound out our thoughts on the matter.

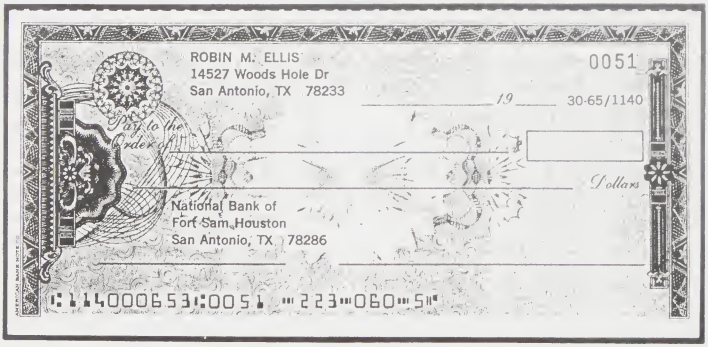
Knowing the intricacies of intaglio engraving and printing, and the 'feel' of the item as you glide your fingers over the surface (try it with a crisp, uncirculated Federal Reserve Note,) I was very pleased to have been asked.

At the time I was editor of the Souvenir Card Journal, the house organ of the Souvenir Card Collectors Society. Three other persons, all well know and established in their own writing and collecting disciplines, were also approached - Gene Hessler, Neil Shafer and Mike Craldo. All of us were interested in intaglio engraving and printing of one form or another, and all of us said "Yes," indicating that we all thought it an excellent idea.

ABNC ran some experiments, testing their proposed printing methods, and in time each of us received boxes of checks printed to reflect our current banks and individual accounts. Two themes were used, both in the left corner of the check - the Statue of Liberty and a lathe work pattern. A sample of the latter illustrates this article. (Incidentally, my address is no longer that shown on the check, and the bank has changed its check coding format.)

The check is normal size (illustrated below at 80%), and the lathe-work border is dark blue; the scroll work is in light blue and the outer edges are also of a light blue (but lighter than the scrolling.) The center of the check, very lightly done, is blue that fuses into a rose hue; the pattern is basically that of a scallop shell.

Unhappily for the collecting fraternity, ABNC did not go forward with the idea of returning to printing checks for the banking public, but it did leave a nice souvenir behind.



The Heyday of American Phototype Part Two

by Ed Lipson

In the previous Check Collector I began a discussion of American Phototype's attempt to dominate and control the check printing business for a short period after they were awarded the sole contract to print revenue stamps on document.

My argument ran thus: "American Phototype's advantage arose from their ability to print the revenue stamp and the check face at the same time, with a government allowance subsidizing the operation. A discount, not available to competitors who would need to pay for the stamp printing from American Phototype and then incur their own printing cost for the check face, would be passed on to the purchaser. It is readily understandable that this situation adversely affected the financial well-being of others in the check and document printing field."

The article went on to show specimens of the black RN Type A as evidence of the dominance of American Phototype.

The Sterling Catalogue describes Type A as follows:

" 'A' Variety 1 American Phototype Co., New York. 2 ct. Black rectangular stamp. Large 2 in center; at left, Internal, at right, Revenue: at top, Two; at base, Cents; in upper corner, U.S.; in lower corner (2). Fancy scroll work around frame. Size, 22 x 25. Used on receipts &c. Colors - black, blue, carmine, lemon, orange, deep orange, pearl, purple on white and blue paper."

The writer has never seen some of the colors and papers listed by Sterling. Conversely, Sterling did not list Type A in green. Specimens of the purple and green imprints are in the author's possession, but not available for illustration. Instead, the actual, used items are shown below.

As mentioned in the previous article, one Julius Bien sent a note to previous American Phototype clients in April of 1866 stating that American Phototype had discontinued the making and furnishing of checkbooks and receipts (in response to a complaint filed with the Commissioner of Internal Revenue the previous December.) The following receipts bearing Type A imprints are examples of this.

The first (**Figure 1**), bearing an imprint grayish-orange in color, is dated January 10, 1866, prior to the Bien note, but after the complaint lodged against American Phototype. The face of the document clearly was printed by American Phototype.

Figure 2 shows a receipt from A. T. Stewart bearing the Type A imprint in orange and dated January 13, 1866, which does not indicate a security printer. It is possible that the Stewart receipts were printed by American Phototype after they became aware of the complaints from other printers lodged against them the previous December.

Another receipt dated prior to April 1866 is shown in **Figure 3**. It bears a Type A imprint in purple, and the text of the document is printed in the same color. Although it does not bear the name of the security printer, it is safe to assume that it was printed in one run of the press by American Phototype. Whether or not this is sufficient evidence to indicate that the A. T. Stewart receipts were also most likely printed by American Phototype is left up to the reader to decide.

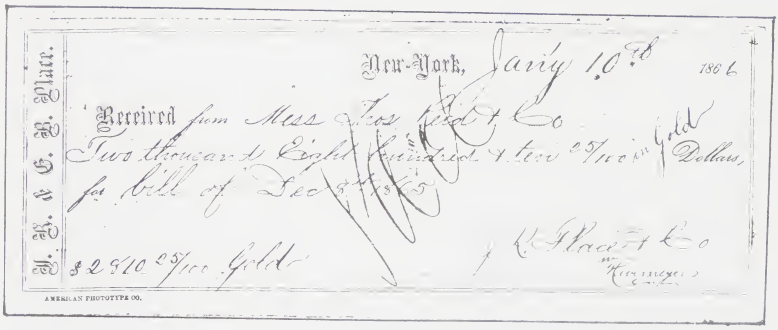

New-York, Jany 10th 1866
Received from Mess Tros Kid & Co
Two Thousand Eight Hundred & four 25/100 Dollars,
for bill of Dec 5th 1865
$2804 25/100 Gold
H. B. & C. B. Marr.
AMERICAN PHOTOTYPE CO.

Figure 1. This particular receipt, face printed in green, has an imprinted revenue which, when viewed initially, appears to be faded. However, several other examples have been examined, and it appears that the color and shade of all are identical. The color can be classified as grayish-orange - *Methuen* 5B3. January 10 is a very early use of Type A in orange, as the ARA Census indicated an earliest known usage date of January 31, 1866. (The imprint will not show up in this illustration.)

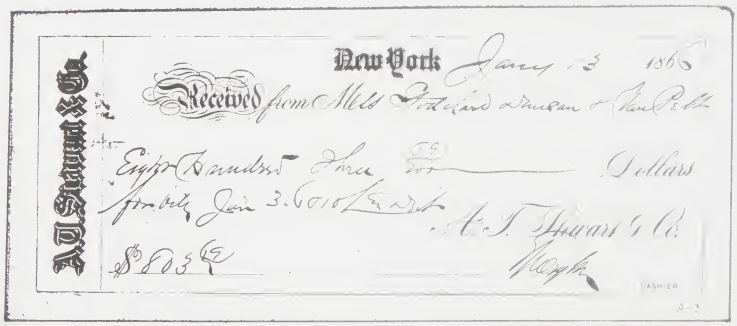

New York Jany 3 1866
Received from Mess Pickard Munson & Van Pelt
Eight Hundred Three 25/100 Dollars
Payable Jan 3. 6010 Lawful Money
A. T. Stewart & Co.
$803 25/100
CASHIER

Figure 2. This receipt bears a Type A imprint in orange, although it will not show up in this illustration. Again, January 13, 1866, is a very early usage date, prior to the earliest recorded in the ARA Census. A. T. Stewart & Company left behind a tremendous heritage in the form of many documents of interest to the fiscal historian.

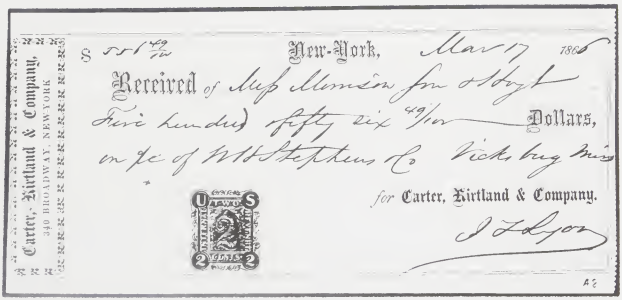

Carter, Kirtland & Company,
440 BROADWAY, NEW YORK
New-York, Mar 17 1866
Received of Mrs Mumford for Hoyt
Five hundred fifty six 49/100 Dollars,
on ac of Mrs Stephens Co Vicksburg Miss
for Carter, Kirtland & Company.
J Hoyt

Figure 3 A receipt issued by Carter, Kirtland & Co. dated March 17, 1866. The face printing and the imprinted revenue are both the same shade of purple.

The fourth and fifth receipts (**Figures 4** and **5**) bear imprints in green, which would have been printed by American Phototype, but the two different printings of the receipts themselves represented here were done by P. F. Bogert, Stationer & Printer, 174 & 176 Pearl Street, New York. They are dated in May and August of 1866, later than the Bien note. By this time American Phototype would not have been printing the documents.

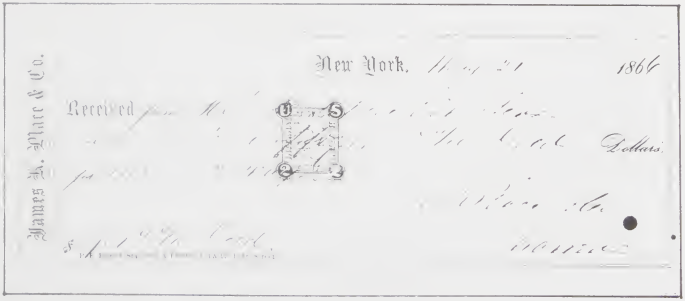


Figure 4. A receipt issued by James R. Place & Co. on May 21, 1866. The revenue is printed in a medium green. Note that the sum was paid in gold, which was not unusual in the days of depreciated currency, but is a notation more often found on checks and drafts than receipts. The back of this document bears a pencil notation: "A-9 $4.00."

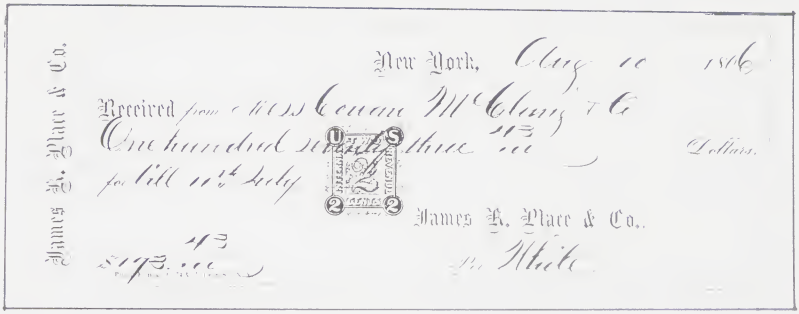

James R. Place & Co.
New York, Aug 10 1866
Received from Miss Emma McClung & Co
One hundred seventy three 73
Dollars.
for bill 11th July
James R. Place & Co.
per White

Figure 5. This receipt, also issued by James R. Place & Co., was issued on August 10, 1866. By this time the face obviously had been reprinted, and the revenue imprint is in a slightly deeper shade of green than the one in **Figure 4**.

This writer also has a "tapeworm" specimen receipt - the only one known to date. The revenue imprint is RN A10a, which bears one full and fifty-three partial impressions in orange. This specimen has the Handbook cancel Type 1 in blue applied diagonally three times. The Handbook describes a specimen of Type A10, with fifty-six partial impressions and Type 1 cancels applied eight times, and pictures a strip of fifty-six on the cover. The writer's copy comes from the Morton Dean Joyce sale, lot 3684, and is believed to be the original from which the Handbook description came. If so, that description is inaccurate as it stands

The next article in this series will discuss Type B checks and samples related to the American Phototype Company, to further demonstrate that company's prevalence in the early days of revenue stamped paper printing.

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Some Unsuccessful Candidates for President

Raymond E. Ekeblad

Every four years the citizens of the United States have the opportunity to elect a new president. The process of selection is very exciting and controversial as potential candidates are considered, rejected and nominated by their political parties. By election day the nominees are well known throughout the land as they debate the issues and attempt to justify their becoming the country's next president.

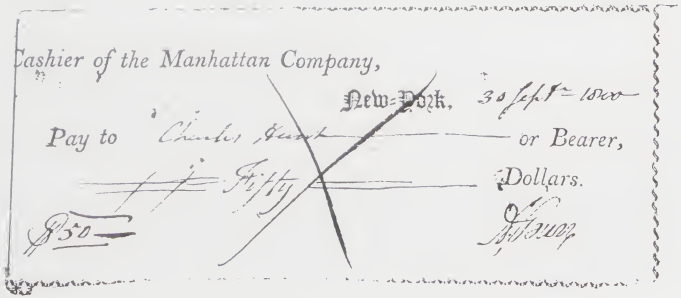
One of the interesting aspects of the election of a president is that the qualifications of the candidates can vary so significantly. The Constitution requires that the president be a natural born citizen, at least thirty five years old, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States. There are no requirements that the president be an experienced politician, congressional leader, lawyer or scholar. Presidents Grant and Eisenhower were soldier heroes of the country's wars. Thomas Jefferson and Woodrow Wilson were scholars. Some of the most brilliant presidents did not attend college. One president was an engraver and another a journalist. Some of the presidents were men who devoted their lives to public service and were well known to the people as a result of their political activities.

Just as the presidents have had varied backgrounds so have the candidates who lost the races to become president. Some of the unsuccessful nominees sprang into the public spotlight shortly before election day and after their defeats returned to oblivion.

Others, well known to the people and no doubt quite qualified from the standpoint of political knowledge to occupy the country's highest elected office, continued to serve the government after their defeats.

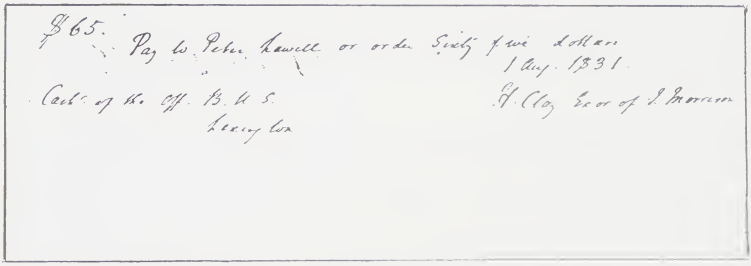
Following are three examples of such men in the early history of our country.

Aaron Burr (1756-1836)
A major U.S. politician who served on George Washington's staff during the American Revolution, he tied with Thomas Jefferson in the presidential election of 1800, but Alexander Hamilton, who was Burr's longtime adversary, influenced the house of Representatives to vote Jefferson in with Burr becoming Vice-president. In 1864 he killed Hamilton in a duel and was a very controversial force in early American politics. In 1799 he organized the Manhattan Company, presumably as a Water company, but it emerged as a Major bank.



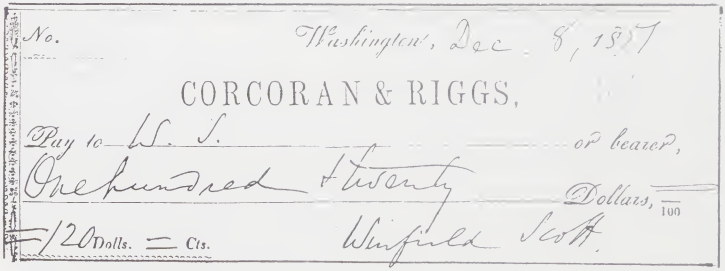
Henry Clay (1777-1852)

Three times a candidate for the presidency, Clay never realized his desire to hold that office. He ran as a National-Republican in 1824 and lost to John Quincy Adams. In 1832 he ran against the national hero Andrew Jackson as a Republican. Then in 1844 as a Whig he lost out to James K. Polk. Clay was a strong political leader and powerful orator.



Winfield Scott (1786-1866)

An outstanding American general known by his nickname "Old Fuss and Feathers," he fought in the War of 1812, the Seminole War, Aroostook War, U.S.-Mexican War of 1846-1848 and the Civil War, 1861-1865. He lost the Whig presidential nomination to Zachary Taylor (1848) and ran for presidency as a candidate of the dissident Whigs (1852) but lost to Franklin Pierce. He continued to be active in Washington politics until his death.



Since we have had 42 presidents in the United States there were many more candidates who lost their bids for the presidency. Collecting their checks and learning about their lives would be a formidable task for any check collector.

My Grandfather's Quarry
by Neil Sowards

One of the plainest, least valuable checks in my collection never-the-less has a special place in my heart. The check is drawn on the First National Bank in Ronceverte, West Virginia by the H. Frazier Company which operated a limestone quarry which produced crushed rock used for railroad ballast.

When I was in the third grade, we lived in Alderson about a dozen miles from this quarry where my grandfather kept the books and ran the company store. We would visit my grandfather by boarding the train at Alderson and riding it to Frazier which was a demand stop, meaning the train only stopped if someone wanted off or wanted to board. There was no station, only the sign board. After alighting, we walked followed a railroad spur to the quarry.

Sometimes we went to grandfather's quarry by road. We drove out to a pull-off on a county road; then we walked down a trail to the quarry. There were no roads or vehicles in the quarry: everything came in by train. As we neared the quarry, my father always motioned us to be quiet and he listened intently. If we heard men and machines working, we continued on. If all was quiet, we knew they were blasting and everyone had been cleared out of the quarry and we could not go on. On those occasions we retreated up the path and waited for the blast

The quarry had a large rock face on one side where rock was blasted loose after the overburden of dirt and trees had been removed and piled up in an unused, mined out part of the quarry.

As we walked, we saw men working in the quarry. Some of the rocks blasted loose were still too big for the steam shovels to handle; therefore they would be drilled with very noisy drills for further blasting. Sometimes we watched the men loading the dynamite into the holes. The dynamite came in strong, wooden boxes. The men broke off the wooden top, revealing the sticks of dynamite in neat rows much like hot dogs at the butcher's. One man carefully cut down the sides of each stick three times. Grownups said that made the force of the explosion go into the rock instead of out of the hole. The sticks were shoved in with a long bamboo pole When the hole was almost full, the cutter burrowed a hole into the end of a stick and then another hole in the side to intersect the first hole Then they threaded a fuse through the hole and tied it on itself. Several sticks were rammed in after the fused stick and the fuses were left hanging out of the holes. We were never allowed to be around during the fuse lighting.

Often at the quarry, we caught a ride on a the crusher. These squat, four wheeled, little steam engines had no tenders, simply carrying the coal to one side of the cab. They traveled slowly on the twisting and turning rails. The steam shovel loaded the string of open top cars which were almost square and sat on four wheels. Their body was a box that somehow pivoted on a center point and was held in place by chains. As I recall, if the chains were released on one side, the car tipped the other way. The dinkeys took the cars up to the top of the rock crusher and dumped them in its great yawning hole. Time and
again we were warned never to go near that hole on our own!

When the dinkeys went up the steep tracks to the quarry, they had trouble getting traction and a man would sit on the front with a dynamite box full of sand and sprinkle it on one rail as the dinkey climbed.

Besides the rock crusher I believe there were sorters that somehow sorted the rock chips into different sizes and then stored them in great bins over the tracks where they could be let into the hopper cars. There were other buildings, but they didn't interest a third grader like the dinkeys.

About two stones' throw down the valley was the company store which my grandfather, I.E.Sowards, managed as well as running the quarry. His office was a small corner room in the store with a safe, files, desk and piles and piles of papers. Each new year he put the new calendar up over the old until the nail could hold no more. Yet somehow he was always able to find what he wanted. Looking back on it now, I surmise there must have been method in this disarray because if the company had replaced him, the new man would not have been able to find anything!

My grandfather kept the books on the quarry. He could add five figure numbers by just going down the page, a feat awe-inspiring to a third grader.

The company store had a wide variety of goods including an assortment of foodstuffs. The porch entrance to the store bridged the stream that ran down the valley. It was roofed and had benches on each side where men sat and chewed tobacco and spat into the stream.

The workers' houses were really only shacks, perching precariously on the hillside and connected with paths. There were no roads or vehicles in the settlement. Many of the shacks had beautiful well-tended gardens, showing that men will take care of what is truly theirs.

While I called it my grandfather's quarry, I knew it reallybelonged to the H. Frazier Company.

Fifty years later I revisited the quarry in 1996 and found it had ceased operation in 1989. The rock crusher and tipple had burned. The workers' shanties had disappeared but the old company store remained. Entering the store I found the roof had failed in many places. The store part was covered with fallen ceiling tiles and the store room had masses of black, sodden paper of indeterminate origin. But to my great amazement, I found, in my grandfather's former office, the company ledgers strewn around on the floor in dry, original condition.

Figure 1. The abandoned Company Store at Frazier's Quarry.

From these books I learned my grandfather, I.E. Sowards, had worked at least from earliest book of 1916 to 1950 when he retired at age 78. The payroll ledger book for August, 1917 showed my grandfather received a monthly salary of $100. He worked 270 hours so averaged thirty seven cents an hour. Employees #38 and #40 were Clyde (my uncle) and Erville, my father. They received twenty cents per hour and worked ten or eleven hours per day. Pay for other employees ranged from eleven cents to thirty five cents in two and a half cent increments. At the bottom of the page was the notation, "The above was paid 9/8/17 O.K. I.E.S." The whole ledger was written by my grandfather!

By 1950 my grandfather's pay had risen to ninety cents an hour. In another ledger, each page was headed, "Purchases by I.E. Sowards, Store Manager." In a typical month the books showed sales of $887.11 of merchandise on credit with only $89.59 being sold for cash.

Also strewn around the floor were numerous checks dated in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. In my grandfather's day all was done by cash, but later, checks were used. Although not from my grandfather's era, I kept a few of these checks for souvenirs which brought back memories of my visits there in 1945 as a third grader.

So one of the plainest checks in my collection is also one that has the most meaning to me.

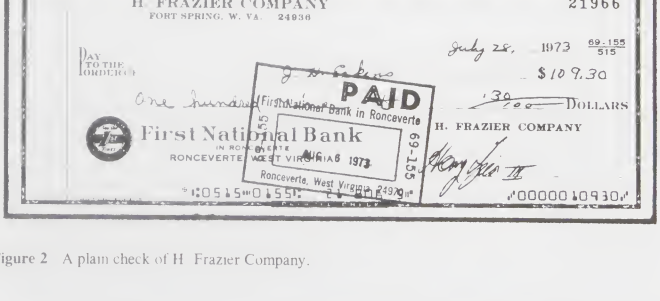


Figure 2 A plain check of H. Frazier Company.

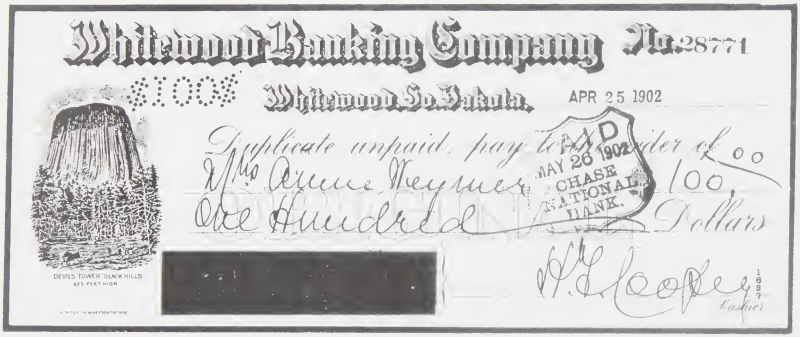
The January-March, 1996 issue of The Check Collector contained an index to issues 1-36. Back issues can be obtained from the Secretary at PO Box, 577, Garrett Park, MD 20896. Cost is $2.50 per copy for one issue, $2.00 for additional issues. In a few cases the back issues will be photocopies. Articles listed as Conversation Piece (cp) and Check Collector's Clearing House (CCCH) are generally one or two pages in length. Photocopies of these are 50 cents each (postpaid).

A photocopy of the "Guide to Check Collecting" series of articles by Bob Spence, which appeared in issues 19-26, is available from the Secretary at $4.00.

A Science Fiction Related Vignette

by Lee E. Poleske

There are very few checks that are collectable to science fiction fans, except checks signed by science fiction authors or actors who have played well known parts in science fiction movies or television series, so I was very happy to see this 1902 cashier's check from Whitewood, South Dakota with a vignette of Devils Tower.



While it is possible that one or more of the officers of the Whitewood Banking Company had read some of the works of Jules Verne or H. G. Wells, there is no way they could have known that the Devils Tower would one day become the symbol for one of the most successful science fiction motion pictures of all time

First some basic facts about the bank and the Tower.

The Whitewood Banking Company was founded in 1895 by Mr. William Selbie. The bank closed its doors in 1938, a victim of the Great Depression.

The Devils Tower is a remnant of a volcanic intrusion, probably formed when molten igneous rock, pushing upward, encountered a hard rock layer and was forced to spread into a flat-topped shape. It was exposed only after the overlaying layer of sedimentary rock had been removed over the ages by wind and water erosion. It is 865 feet high, the tallest rock formation of its kind in the United States. The base diameter is about 1000 feet and the summit diameter is about 275 feet.

The Tower is located in Crook county, Wyoming overlooking the Belle Fourche River, a little over 50 miles from Whitewood, South Dakota. The Sioux Indians called it "the bad god's tower", which no doubt is the origin of its current name Devils Tower. (The majority of references I looked at spelled "Devils" without an apostrophe.)

The Tower is the main feature of the 1,346 acre Devils Tower National Monument, created in September 24, 1906. It was the first national monument created in the United States.

The Tower became famous among science fiction fans in 1977 as the site ofthe landing of the alien space ship in Steven Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

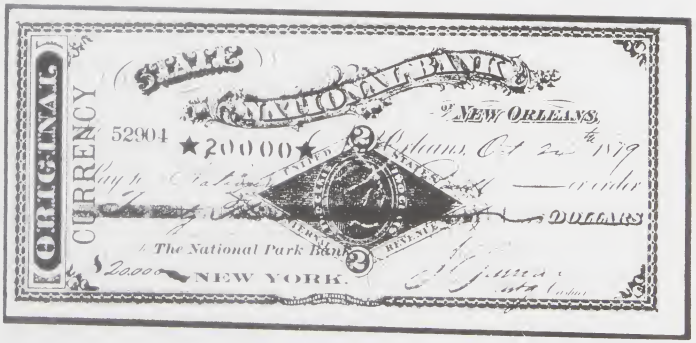
Early in the motion picture, the location of the landing site is planted telepathically in the mind of Roy Neary (Richard Dreyfuss) by the aliens and he starts building models of it first at the dinner table with his mashed potatoes and finally one of dirt and rocks which fills his living room. He then sets out to find the actual place and discovers a top secret UFO landing base, at the base of the Tower, built by the government for a meeting with the alien ship.

The base movie set was not at the Tower, but was actually built in an abandoned hanger in Mobile Alabama, since no sound stage in Hollywood was large enough for the set.

In the spectacular landing scene, after several smaller ships have preceded it, thehuge mother ship, ablaze with lights, rises from behind Devils Tower and lands at the base.

This vignette illustrates an important point: time and a collector's personal interests can change how a vignette is perceived. In 1902 this vignette was a depiction of an unusual natural phenomenon. To many that is still how it is perceived, but to science fiction fans, it has the added attraction of showing a geographic feature that played a large part in a great science fiction film.

A Find in the Marketplace

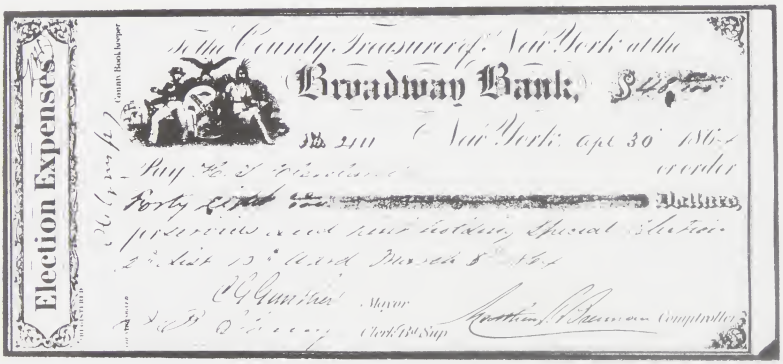


Louisiana revenue stamped paper bearing the Type G imprint is uncommon. This handsome item, printed by the National Bank Note Company of New York, was found at the Memphis Paper Money Show.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I am a member of the ASCC and also collect Civil War items. I purchased five checks at a local swap meet because of the 1864 date on them. I didn't pay much attention to them until I returned home. The following is one of them.



I have never seen any checks with the Election Expense designation before. These are all identical except for the payee. It also seems odd that they are signed by the Mayor, Clerk Bd. (Board?) Superintendent, Comptroller and County Book-Keeper. I have quite a few checks drawn on the Broadway Bank but had never run across any like these.

I'd appreciate any information on the checks, such as rarity, value, etc. Thanks a lot.

Robert E. Whitley

Re: A Conversation Piece

In *TCC* 38 (the last issue) you illustrated a check for ten cents for the tenth and final dividend of the American National Bank of Baltimore. I have similar checks for six cents for the sixth dividend of the City National Bank of Buffalo, New York, and for three cents for a dividend of the National Bank of Illinois, Chicago.

From the *Standard Catalog of National Bank Notes*, by John Hickman and Dean Oakes, Krause Publications, Iola, Wisconsin, First Edition, 1982:
"The American National Bank of Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland (No. 4518). Organized on February 10, 1891 with a capital of $100,000. Placed in receivership on December 21, 1900; capital of $200,000. Reason for failure, incompetent management."

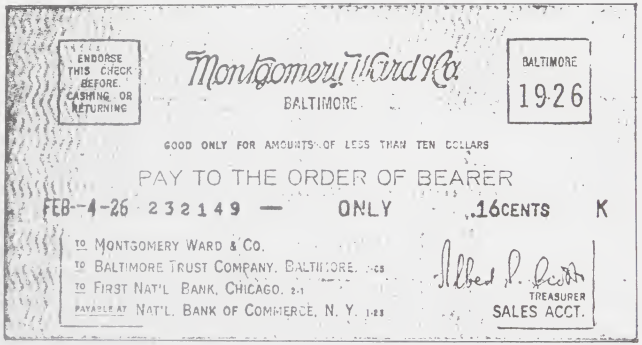
Similar entries are made for the National Bank of Illinois and the City National Bank of Buffalo. Possibly these checks were dividends on interest bearing accounts in these failed banks?

- Herman Boraker

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir:

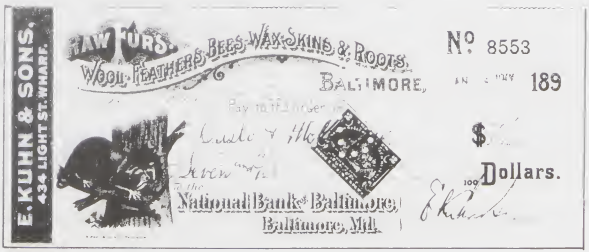
I've enclosed a check that is, to me anyway, rather unusual. As you can see it is a refund check for the amount of sixteen cents. My guess is that this was produced through a cash register in connection with a return of merchandise. Was this typical of the era? Any information on this type of check would be appreciated.


ENDORSE THIS CHECK BEFORE CASHING OR RETURNING
Montgomery Ward & Co.
BALTIMORE
BALTIMORE
1926
GOOD ONLY FOR AMOUNTS OF LESS THAN TEN DOLLARS
PAY TO THE ORDER OF BEARER
FEB-4-26 232149 — ONLY .16CENTS K
TO MONTGOMERY WARD & CO.
TO BALTIMORE TRUST COMPANY, BALTIMORE, MD.
TO FIRST NAT'L BANK, CHICAGO, ILL.
PAYABLE AT NAT'L BANK OF COMMERCE, N. Y.
TREASURER
SALES ACCT.

(Check is shown full size)

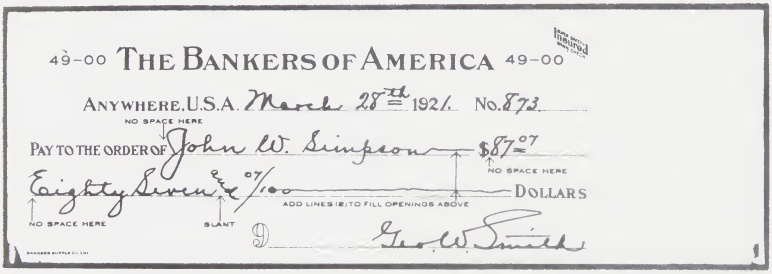
Jerry Boone

A Conversation Piece

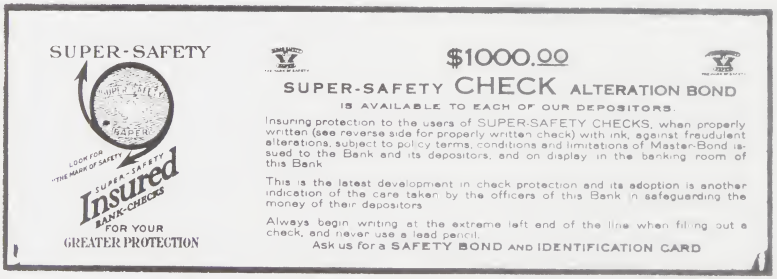


Basic Education: How to Write a Check
by Richard L. Biemer

As an item of interest, this model is appealing. The example shown is typical, and was usually the first item in a personal pocket- or purse-size pack.


49-00 THE BANKERS OF AMERICA 49-00
ANYWHERE, U.S.A. March 28th 1921 No. 873
NO SPACE HERE
PAY TO THE ORDER OF John W. Simpson $87.07
NO SPACE HERE
Eighty Seven & 07/100 DOLLARS
ADD LINES (E) TO FILL OPENINGS ABOVE
NO SPACE HERE
SLANT
Geo. W. Smith

The reverse of the slip contains extensive information about the benefits derived from using this printer's checks.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SUPER-SAFETY
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This is the latest development in check protection and its adoption is another indication of the care taken by the officers of this Bank in safeguarding the money of their depositors
Always begin writing at the extreme left end of the line when filling out a check, and never use a lead pencil.
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The Eleventh Annual National and World Paper Money Convention will be held in Saint Louis at the Ramada Henry VIII Hotel, 4690 North Lindbergh Boulevard on October 25-27, 1996. This is always a good show for check collectors.

For information, contact Kevin Foley, (414) 282-2388

What's Happening Out West...

Martha Cox

It's been an interesting summer, and a different one. One of my main interests is railroad checks and, because of my husband's interests, almost everything else pertaining to railroads. So, instead of coin and stamp shows, we found ourselves at a lot of train shows. If your interest falls along the same lines, I would suggest checking out a train show or two. You might find just what you are looking for.

My mailbox has been brimming with auction catalogs, fixed price catalogs and show schedules. Unfortunately, due to auction and publication deadlines which can run head to head, not everything will be listed here, but thank you for your effort, and keep them coming. Thanks go to those listed below. Their current auction deadlines may have expired, but write to them for their next catalog. There may be a nominal fee. Tell them where you heard about them.

Vern Potter, Box 10040, Torrance, CA 90505-0740
(213) 326-0406

Eric Jackson, Box 728, Leesport, PA 19533
(610) 926-6200

Scott Winslow Associates, Inc., Box 10240, Bedford, NH 03110 (603) 472-7040

James J. Reeves, Box 219, Huntingdon, PA 16652-0219 (814) 643-5497

M. S. Kazanjian, 25 King Philip Ave., Barrington, RI 02806

Cohasco, Inc., Postal 821, Yonkers, NY 10702
(914) 476-8500

And now for the fall show schedule:

October 4-6
Sportsbuff Gun Show
Sequoia Athletic Conference Center
7530 Orangethorpe Ave., Buena Park, CA
Information: (310) 457-4997

Oct 4-6
West Coast Expos Fall Coin Show
International Trade Center
2610 Elliott Ave., Seattle, WA
Teresa Darling, (714) 895-2800

Oct 23-27
16th Annual National Silver Dollar Convention
Sands Expo and Convention Center
201 E. Sands Ave., LasVegas, NV
John & Marlene Highfill, (918) 254-6901

Nov 2-3
SCPNA Numismatic & Educational Expo
Retail Clerks Hall
8550 Stanton Ave., Buena Park, CA
Bob Patchin, (714) 639-6202

Nov 7-9
San Francisco Coin Show
Cathedral Hill Hotel
Van Ness & Geary, San Francisco
Robert Brueggeman, (619) 728-1300

Nov 8-10
Numismatic, Philatelic & Sports Card Exposition
National Western Complex-Expo Hall
4655 Humbolt St., I-70 & Brighton Blvd Exit
Denver, CO
Jerry Morgan, (759-1895

Nov 14-17
HSNA Coin Show
Queen Kapiolani Hotel
150 Kapahula Ave., Honolulu, HI
M.F. Kendrick, Box 477, Honolulu, HI 96809

Nov 22-24
All American Coin, Stamp & Sports Card Show
Convention Center
5001 Great American Pkwy., Santa Clara, CA
Rudy Christians, (916) 528-8329

Thank you for your support of our dealer members by mail and attendance at their shows. This sounds like a very busy and exciting fall schedule.

The foregoing information is a compilation of several listings. Please "double check" before you make a trip to any of these events. Sometimes shows are cancelled or events may change.

Forward your catalogs and correspondence to: Martha Cox, 14085 Mango Drive, Del Mar, CA 92014. Information on events from the period January-March 1997 should be sent to me **no later than** November 10, 1996, the deadline for inclusion in the next issue of *The Check Collector*.

Secretary's Report

Coleman Leifer

This includes changes received through September 4, 1996.

NEW MEMBERS

1551	CARTER, BEN 1612 Third St Manhattan Beach CA 90266-6304 (through the Internet)	1, 14, 23
1550	FILHO, ANTONIO MANO Caixa Postal, 479 78005-970 CUIABA MT BRAZIL (by Herman Boraker)	1, 22, 26, Post Cards, Phonecards, Lottery
1554	PICKERING, DONALD C. 13 Burnett St Nashua NH 03060 (by Mike Kazanjian)	2 (NH), 31 (NH)
1553	RADER, KAYE 1861 Kingston Way Lawrenceville GA 30244 (by Judith Murphy)	2 (Coca-Cola checks)
1552	WOOL, ROBERT A. 1049 Kercher Av Leesport PA 19533 (through the Internet)	21

REINSTATED (From NPD LIST)

1166	THOMPSON, MIKE W. (C/D) 732 E. Highland Red Oak TX 75154	2 (Texas and Southern), 4, 21-22, 30-31

ADDRESS CHANGES AND CORRECTIONS

1529 BARROGA, KENNETH J. 110 Zils Rd La Selva Beach CA 95076-1901
1186 ENGEL, CRAIG A. PO Box 566 Hamilton MT 59840-0566
1179 JOHNSON, HARRY R. SR. PO Box 16843 West Palm Beach FL 33416-6843

DECEASED (from NPD list)

0909 PASLAWSKY, JOHN T.

DROPPED - NON-PAYMENT OF DUES

1526 RINDGE, R.L.

Anecdote to the Editor

Dear Editor,

From a letter I received from a 'ham' radio friend:

"I live in the Eskimo village of Ambler, Alaska. It is approximately 150 miles to the closest bank - by dog sled. Because of this there is a constant shortage of currency. To confront the problem, signed personal checks are passed back and forth like money.

Once I bought 20 gallons of gas at the village fuel pump and the total came to $71.20. I fanned through my wad of hand-me-down checks and gave the attendant one made out to and signed by a man I never heard of. Then I handed her another one whose check would be sure to bounce if it were ever sent to a bank.

As change she gave me a well-worn check, her last quarter and 32 pennies. 'Thanks for paying cash,' she said."

Max Studley

P.S By way of contrast, in my little village of Bucerias, Mexico, checks are unknown. The bank neither issues nor accepts them.

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NOTE - Just arrived - huge hoard of 19th century vignetted checks, including territorial, to be included in forthcoming sales!

The Paperpreneur offers a unique selection of paper ephemera, historical documents and collectibles, including Advertising, Americana, Financial, Personal, Photography, Military, Playthings, Shipping, Smalls, Victoriana, and much more. Relaxed, comfortable atmosphere and personal service is our creed. Send 55¢ stamp for our latest list.

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